

Season 2017/2018

Belgrade Philharmonic Orchestra

Series: ***Fire***

Conductor **Gabriel Feltz**

Kolarac Concert Hall
Friday, 2 March 2018, 8:00 p.m.

Program:

Reinhold Glière

Symphony No. 3 in B minor, op. 42 (*Ilya Muromets*)

Duration: 76 min.

Concertmaster: Miroslav Pavlović

Reinhold Glière (1875-1956) is one of the representatives of the last generation of Russian composers to start their creative work before the Revolution. Glière's artistic opus can be characterized as distinctly romantic, with a proclivity for big genres - opera, ballet, and symphony. His penchant for exploring the details of timbres of a big symphony orchestra and of the folk music of the Soviet peoples, has colored his works with exceptional warmth. Glière can be recognized mainly by his works from his conceptual opus, first of all by his concertos for horn and harp; of his three symphonic works, the most notable of which is his Third Symphony, written in 1911.

Nowadays, Symphony No. 3, "Ilya Muromets" is viewed as one of Glière's best works. However, regrettably, it is not performed very often. By form it is a program symphony. Like the operas of A. Borodin and M. Mussorgsky, this work is a testament to the rich Russian history, rendering it even more picturesque and exciting through a unique blend of historical and fictional characters. The hero of Glière's work is Ilya Muromets, the most famous member of a mythical order of knights-errant called bogatyrs; the adventures of this hero were allegedly inspired by a real historical figure from the 12th century, a medieval warrior and monk, Ilya Pechersky, who was posthumously beatified in the Russian Orthodox Church. The characteristic interweaving of historical facts and mythical embellishments are typical for the complex centuries-old narrative tradition that gave rise to the stories about Ilya Muromets, and thus the anachronous and eclectic spirit of the legend of Muromets remains preserved in the program of Glière's symphony.

As a first-rate opera composer, Glière has taken the principle of the narrative flow, which shapes and moves the musical flow, and applied it in his symphonic creations. His symphony is conceived with the intention of depicting the most important moments in Ilya's life, from the time he became a bogatyr, with all his great battles and triumphs, to a glorious death, not only of Ilya Muromets, but of the entire bogatyr order. By its narrative concept, the selected program follows a traditional order of movements in a symphony cycle: the first movement blends a moody introduction into the composition's archaic world with an exposition of the main hero as well as the symphony's basic musical motifs; the second movement is intriguing as a transformation of a typically utopian romantic pastoral scene into a world of nature that denotes danger rather than respite; the third movement is dance-like, spritely, and grotesque all at the same time, and the fourth movement is a turbulent and dramatic Finale, in which the story of Ilya achieves its tragic culmination. The music is entirely faithful - but not subordinated - to the program and mannerism of Hector Berlioz and Richard Strauss, and the work abounds with numerous effects of tonal rendering and character leitmotifs. The brief and lonely horn represents Ilya's heroic nature, a solemn brass chorale calls for the aging Svyatogor, while the piercing woodwind whistle is suggestive of the deadly whistle of the brigand Solovei (Nightingale). In the dark forest where he resides, the flutes, oboes and horns depict birdsong along with the chirping chromatic scales played by the strings, corresponding in character to the villain's leitmotif, a quiet and dark melody of the contrabassoon. The archaic church hymn played by the bassoon and the English horn symbolizes the beginning of the epic story, as the motif of the two pilgrims who determine Ilya's destiny as a hero in the first movement, and at the same time also its end; its renewed appearance in the symphony's final movement represents the

two invincible warriors and the inexorable disappearance of Ilya and the other bogatyr from Russian history. The symphony's solemn epilogue is appropriately rounded off through a reminiscence of the most significant musical themes, through flashbacks to earlier scenes.

On this occasion, the Belgrade Philharmonic is performing Glière's Symphony No. 3 for the very first time.

Tisa Jukic

The next concert of the Belgrade Philharmonic Orchestra, as part of its **Earth** series, will be held at the Kolarac Concert Hall on Friday, 9 March, at 8:00 p.m.

Conductor: **Michail Jurowski**

Soloist: **Filip Savic**, double bass

Program:

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Serenata notturna K 239

Johann Baptist Vanhal

Concerto for Double Bass and Orchestra in D major

Antonin Dvorak

Symphony No. 9 in E minor (*From the New World*)

Dear subscribers, we would like to inform you that musicologist Maja Colovic-Vasic will be giving introductory lectures about the works that are on the program before the beginning of every concert. The lectures will be held at the Kolarac Music Gallery, beginning at 7:30 p.m.

The newly appointed Chief Conductor of the Belgrade Philharmonic Orchestra, **Gabriel Feltz** was born in 1971 in Berlin. Since 2013, Feltz has concurrently worked as the Generalmusikdirektor of the Dortmund Opera and Chief Conductor of the Dortmund Philharmonic Orchestra. After three very successful years, his contract has been renewed ahead of time until 2023. After the Philharmonic Orchestra Altenburg-Gera (2001-2005) and the Stuttgart Philharmonic Orchestra (2004 – 2013) this is his third position in a row as chief conductor of a German orchestra. With unusual programs and a marked rise of musical quality he managed to increase audiences significantly with all these orchestras. In 2007, the *Sergej Rachmaninow Foundation* awarded Gabriel Feltz and the Stuttgart Philharmonic Orchestra the *Prix Rachmaninow* for their exceptionally extensive Rachmaninow concert cycle. In addition, Feltz has been Principal Guest Conductor at the Basel Theatre (2008-2013) and had been responsible for several opera productions, which led to the Basel Theatre being named *Opera House of the Year* in 2009 and 2010.

From 1989 to 1994, Gabriel Feltz studied conducting and piano at the *Hanns Eisler Academy* of Music in Berlin. After the studies, he became Gerd Albrecht's assistant at the Hamburg State Opera (1994-1995). The first engagements took him to the Lübeck Opera (1995-1997) and the Bremen Theatre (1997-2001).

Gabriel Feltz has conducted leading orchestras in Germany and abroad such as Sächsische Staatskapelle Dresden, the Symphonieorchester of the Bayerischen Rundfunk, the Bavarian State Orchestra, the Deutsche Symphonie-Orchester Berlin, the Konzerthausorchester Berlin, the Frankfurt Opernhaus- and Museumsorchester, Staatskapelle Weimar, the orchestra of the Nationaltheater Mannheim, the Bamberger Symphoniker, the Essen Philharmonic, the Radio Symphony Orchestras of Berlin (RSB), Cologne (WDR), Leipzig (MDR), Hannover (NDR) and Saarbrücken (SR), the German National Youth Orchestra, the Vienna Radio Symphony Orchestra, the Danish National Symphony Orchestra, the Berner Symphonieorchester, the Sinfonieorchester Basel, the Orchestra of the Vlaamse Opera Antwerpen, the RTE National Symphony Orchestra (Ireland), the KBS Symphony Orchestra Seoul, the Orchestre Symphonique de Mulhouse, as well as the Guangzhou Symphony Orchestra, the China National Symphony Orchestra and the Beijing Symphony Orchestra. In 2013/14, Gabriel Feltz gave his highly successful debut at the Komische Oper Berlin with Bernd Alois Zimmermann's *Die Soldaten* and in the same season he conducted the *Flying Dutchman* at the Bavarian State Opera. Gabriel Feltz' personal highlight of the 2014/15 season was Gustav Mahler's 8th Symphony for the 200 Anniversary celebrations of the Musikverein Graz.

The extensive Discography of Gabriel Feltz makes him one of the outstanding conductors of his generation. The repertoire ranges from Mozart and Beethoven to Rachmaninoff, Elgar, Prokofiev, Scriabin and Richard Strauss to Nono and Ligeti. In 2007, Gabriel Feltz started the recording of all Mahler symphonies (*Dreyer-Gaido*) with the Stuttgart Philharmonic Orchestra. At the moment, the symphonies 1–7 are available. The cycle is highly acclaimed as the most "extraordinary and controversial cycle of the recent years". The recording of Luigi Nono's *Intolleranza* performed by the Bremen Philharmonic Orchestra and the choir of the Bremen Opera under Gabriel Feltz has been awarded the *Diapason d'Or* in June 2013.

Ottorino Respighi's *Belkis – Regina di Saba* has been released in 2013 . This recording is the first complete performance of the piece that is highly appreciated by Feltz since its world premiere in 1932 at La Scala, Milano. The TV production of *Aida am Rhein* under Maestro Feltz had an outstanding success all over Europe (live on Swiss TV, 3Sat, RAI, ZDF) and is available on DVD.

His future projects include concerts and opera productions in Berlin, Zürich, Taipei (Taiwan), Köln, Graz, Sendai (Japan) and San Antonio (USA).